drsohail Part 2

This is the continuation of the email exchanges I had with Dr. Sohail

> Dr. Sohail wrote:
> I believe Islam to be the best religion in the world &Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to be the true Last Messenger of Almighty Allah. (Relax I'm not starting a debate!)
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> Before I get into a discussion with you over Islam here's an easy query for you to answer (kindly don't misquote & misinterpret my words):
> As far as I know you're an atheist which means you don't believe in the existence of God & we all know that every human being will die someday...IF FOR THE SAKE OF ARGUMENT, I agree with you that whatever you say about Islam is true then can you tell me what do you believe will happen to you after you die?

I do not know what will happen to us after we die. Most likely we simply cease to exist. Is it possible that a reality of us survive after we die? Is it possible that the world is more complex than what meets the eye? Could there be other worlds with different dimensions parallel to ours of which we have no knowledge? How can we know? The fact is that even if such worlds exist, we have no evidence of their existence and therefore they belong to the realm of speculation. It is okay to speculate, but it is not wise to hinge our lives around things that are speculative in nature. There is only one life of which we can be certain and it is this life – the one that we are living. We must make the most of it.

The best way to make the most of this life is to make our species advance. We humans are social animals. Our happiness depends on the happiness of our fellow beings. Nature has made us such that the greatest pleasures we feel are in giving and in helping others. Those who help others do so because they enjoy it. There is no pleasure greater than making others happy. Empathy is something that has evolved in us humans. Apparently we are not the only species capable of empathy. Recently I saw a video on Youtube that stunned and amazed me and made me change my understanding of the animal world forcing me to respect them to the point of reverence. The amateur video shows that a buffalo calf is caught by a pride of lions and then the entire buffalo herd regroups, surrounds the pride, attacks the lions and rescues the calf. These buffalos risked their own lives to save the life of one of their own. What an astounding evidence that many species of animals do care about their own kind and are willing to risk their own lives to save the lives of others.

Empathy, like intelligence is a biological phenomenon. A study shows that the area of the brain associated with higher-level thinking, empathy, and guilt is underused by teenagers. When considering an action, the teenage medial prefrontal cortex, located in front of the brain, doesn't get as much action as adults. Empathy is a basic part of human nature that allows people to care about others. This study suggests that empathy is a learned behavior.

Another study suggests damage to the brain limits empathy. When asked if they would kill someone for a greater cause, such as saving the lives of more people, those with damaged brains often responded affirmatively while the subjects with normal brains were not prepared to kill someone even for a greater cause. According to Dr. Antonio Damasio, one of the study's lead authors, "Part of our moral behavior is grounded ... in a specific part of our brains,"

Some cultures are noticeably more empathic than others. High on the list are Indian and western cultures. Low on the list, are Islamic cultures, irrespective of their race or nationality. Muslims often rationalize the pain and suffering caused to non-Muslims, citing Abu Ghraib, Hiroshima, Palestine and other unrelated topics to justify the senseless killing of innocent people. Some zealot Muslims do not feel the pain of other Muslims either. They are constantly fighting and shedding each other's blood. The very Islamic belief that God would burn the non-Muslims for eternity and their inability to see anything wrong in this patent injustice is a clear indication of their lack of empathy. No other religion has such a blanket condemnation of its detractors.

Now, it would be unreasonable to suggest that Muslims, as a group, are brain damaged. So how can we understand the general lack of empathy in a large number of them towards other humans particularly the non-Muslims? This conundrum can be explained through the findings of another study.

A French and American team of social-cognitive neuroscientists have identified a network of brain regions that are involved in human imitation. The scope of the research was to find the neurological basis of social interaction, particularly empathy. The team is headed by neuroscientist Jean Decety of France 's Institut de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale and a visiting scientist at the University of Washington 's Center for Mind, Brain & Learning, and developmental psychologist Andrew Meltzoff, co-director of the center.

Their study suggests that empathy is learned through imitation. "This work is important because imitation is a natural procedure. We don't learn to imitate. It is part of our biological nature and we are born to imitate," said Decety.

Children learn empathy if they see empathy. It is a mistake to assume all cultures are equal or buy into the lie that all people are the same and that bad and good are equally distributed among all nations. There are definitely nations that are more ethical and empathic than others. There are societies that generally lack empathy. In the western societies good people are the majority and bad people are exceptions. Westerners have written and adopted The Universal Declaration of Human Rights where all humans are regarded as equals and deserving of the same rights.

unable to accept precepts of equality and fairness, Muslims have created their own version, calling it "Islamic Universal Declaration of Human Rights" were freedom of speech is controlled and Muslims have more rights than non-Muslims.

How can we explain this difference? We humans are genetically made of the same stock and are the same species. So, how can we explain the fact that there are cultures that are more empathic than others? Westerners are very likely to give money to charities, even when they are not wealthy. Muslims in general do not give to charities unless they believe they will be rewarded for it in the next world. Islamic charities are not geared to help the poor but to promote Islam, such as build mosques, print Islamic literature to distribute for free, or to finance Jihad. This is how Muslims perceive charity. Muslims also give to the poor. However, the intent is to gain the pleasure of Allah and be rewarded in the afterlife. I recall once I stayed at the home of an aunt and a beggar knocked at the door asking for something to eat. My aunt went to the kitchen, rapped some food in a piece of bread and gave it to him. But before, she rotated the food around my head. I perfectly knew what she was doing. According to her belief system, by rotating the food around someone's head she would collect the ills surrounding that person and give it away. As a child I believed this to be true and felt guilty. I did not want someone else receive the calamities that were destined for me just for a piece of bread. That seemed to be an unjust trade. This kind of charity is called sadaqeh. The intent of sadaqeh is to send away the ill and give it to someone else and of course be "rewarded" for it as well. Everything Muslims do is for reward, a vacuous promise of gaining Allah's compensation in the afterlife.

A sad reality that sheds light on the Muslim mind is the fact that they rarely volunteer to donate organs or blood; but, unlike Jehovah's witnesses, they would accept organ and blood donations.

Good people often do bad things when inspired by bad religious teachings, with clarity of conscience. An entire society can lack empathy. If the ethos of that society does not promote empathy people do not learn it. The evolution of empathy in the West is recent. Only a hundred years ago the westerners felt no qualm colonizing other nations, subjugating and exploiting them. The unjust Opium War that the British waged against the Chinese to destroy them with addiction because the Chinese would not accept wool in exchange for their tea, is only a token of the lack of empathy and the injustice of the Europeans. Another example is what the Germans did less than seventy years ago. However, it is unlikely that either the Germans or the British of today would allow their governments to commit such acts of inhumanity. The ethos of these people has changed and as the result their level of empathy is raised.

Many ex-Muslims will tell you that prior to their rejection of Islam they had no empathy for the pains of the non-Muslims and some have even confessed that they were elated when they heard about the September 11 calamity that killed many innocent people. Even the westerners, upon converting to Islam lose their empathy. Yvonne Riddley, the BBC journalist who converted to Islam, has given her unconditional support to the terrorists, calling them "heroes" and "martyrs" and has justified their murder of innocent people including the children of Beslan. Joseph Cohen, a Jew who changed his name to Yusuf Khattab after converting to Islam, has also expressed his approval of the killing of Israelis, including their children.

Left on our own, with no ideology or belief system to poison our minds and divide us, we humans are naturally capable of having high levels of empathy for each other. Many gregarious animals, including some social insects such as bees, are capable of great self sacrifice for their kind. I am sure buffaloes do not have prophets to teach them empathy. This proves that empathy is completely biological. We do not need a reason or a cause to live together in harmony. However, to hate one another we need causes and beliefs that instill in us the hatred of our fellow beings. These causes could be spurious religious beliefs, such as Islam or fascistic political ideologies, such as Nazism or communism. People with no ideologies, have less reason to wage war.

It is clear that we can develop empathy or lose it through education and belief. Actually it is amazing how fast one can acquire empathy or lose it. I felt no pain or sorrow upon hearing the violent death of Musab al Zarqawi, the Jordanian terrorist who had killed over a thousand people in Iraq, nor did I feel any sadness upon the execution of Saddam Hussein. I must confess that I even felt relieved, and the news of their death felt good. Now, this feeling is generally alien to me. I often feel the pain of others, not just in my mind but also in m body. Watching the picture of a woman being stoned makes my body ache, as if I am being stoned. Despite the proliferation of the videos of beheadings, I have not been able to watch any of them yet. I feel the knife on my own throat and have to stop the video or close my eyes. The only way I can explain this double standard is that we humans must have the ability to switch on and off our empathy “button” at will. When terrorists are killed I justify their death and feel good and when innocent people are killed I feel I am being violated and empathize with them. This is the choice I have made. Those Muslims, who find themselves on the other side of the fence and sympathize with the terrorists and their cause, empathize with them while they rejoice when an innocent non believer is killed. What separate good people from bad people are the causes that they embrace and since the definition of good and bad for each person is different, people commit evil with clear conscience once they embrace ideologies that are evil.

This makes our problem very clear. It is evil ideologies that reduce people into bloodthirsty beasts and heartless killers. It is these ideologies that we have to fight and eliminate. People are the same everywhere. We were all born innocent. What make us different are our belief systems.

Some Muslim children are nurtured with the hatred of the non believers, particularly the Jews. Even a “moderate” Muslim like Dr. Mahathir, the ex-Prime minister of Malaysia, who probably has never seen a Jew in person, was so much paranoid of them that in his speech addressed to the Muslim leaders of the world, in 2003, blamed the Jews for everything that is wrong in the Muslim world. When people grow in such an environment filled with hate, there is little room for empathy in their minds.

Empathy makes us not only feel the pain of others, but also their happiness. Isn’t it true that seeing a happy face makes you happy? The reverse is also true. Seeing a person crying and in pain saddens you. Because, as species we humans are capable of having high levels

of empathy, we can rejoice and be happy in the happiness of others. This is the crux of the matter.

Why should we be kind to others, help our fellow beings and strive to bring happiness to their lives, if there is no hell and heaven? It is because once we develop empathy, we do not need a compensation for our good deeds and kindness to others. The fact that we can help someone and make him or her happy is by itself rewarding. It is the happiness of others that makes us happy. Many people did not know Nazanin, the young Iranian girl who was sentenced to be hanged by the Islamic courts for defending herself against a rapist, which accidentally killed him. People all over the world felt her pain and started a campaign to urge the Islamic regime to set her free. Under the pressure of the world opinion the courts in Iran buckled and Nazanin was released. Her picture with a big smile after gaining her freedom brought joy to the hearts of all those who had strove for her freedom. I felt elated and tears of joy bubbled in my eyes, even though I do not know that young woman. This is called empathy. We feel the pain of others and rejoice in their happiness. There is no other reward needed in making someone happy. The reward is intrinsic in the very act of kindness.

What about those people who have no empathy, like criminals, the brain damaged and the terrorists? They are mishaps. The criminals and the brain damaged must be rehabbed. The terrorists must be weaned from their cultic beliefs. As long as they hold unto their belief, and to the degree that they are inspired by the hate speeches of their religious leaders, there is little difference between the terrorists and criminals or brain damaged people. The actions of the terrorists and the moral support that they get from millions of their like minded coreligionists, is an eloquent testimony that not all doctrines are harmless.

Whether we like it or not and whether it is politically correct to say it or not, we have to accept the fact that those Muslims who regularly go to the mosque and fill their minds with the venomous sermons of their hate spewing mullahs, have little empathy for the rest of mankind. What distinguishes us humans from lower forms of life is empathy. If even buffaloes can have empathy for their kind, the terrorists and those who support them can be ranked as less than beasts.

As I stated above, empathy can be learned and it can be switched off and on. Once these hardened fanatics leave their doctrine of hate they often acquire empathy quite fast. Suddenly they can see other humans as fellow beings and feel their sorrow and happiness. The reverse is also true. Once someone falls into the trap of Islam, it takes very little time before he or she starts hating everyone and everything.

Dante described hell as a place where there is no hope. I agree with that description and add one more. Hell is where there is no love. By this definition, those who hate mankind live in hell. They wake up every morning and go to bed every night feeling nothing but hatred. A hatred that is fueled by lies, so intense that derives them to commit suicide in order to take their revenge. This is hell.

We humans care about each other. That is because our survival as a species depends on it. Therefore, empathy is natural and a necessity of life in us. In giving, we enrich our own lives. Giving validates our sense of humanness and makes us feel complete. We feel pleasure in giving, in helping, in making others happy and in alleviating people's pains. This feeling is very natural to us humans, unless we lose it through evil indoctrination.

One does not need any religion or belief to have empathy because, just like intelligence, empathy is part of our evolutionary make up. However, like intelligence, it has to be nurtured to develop. Since religion is the expression of everything that is noble and good in us humans, most religions emphasize on this aspect of our humanness and encourage us to be giving, loving and helping. Nonetheless, it is a mistake to assume that it is because of religion that we have empathy. It is actually the other way round. Religions have adopted what is essentially a human experience. The reason we are attracted to religions that teach love is because they speak the language of our heart. They tell us what we already know to be true and aspire.

Islamic teachings contain passages that can bee seen as hate mongering. They can reduce those who take them literally into zombies. They take away their humanity and make them monsters who think of nothing but how to kill other humans. With false promises of a shamefully orgiastic afterlife and threats of a sadistic hell, some so called religious teachings, rub the intelligence and the conscience of their victims reducing them into less than beasts. Once you lose your humanity, there is nothing left in you than bestiality. Take a look at what is happening in Iraq and in Palestine these days. Muslims are killing one another in the most savage ways. This is not new. Muslims have been killing each other since the day Muhammad died.

Whether there is an afterlife or not, we don't know. Assuming there is, of one thing we can be sure, and that is evildoers will not be rewarded. Those who go against human nature and kill their kind can't expect to be rewarded. If there is a hell these evildoers will be sent to the pit of it. God will not reward people who hate and kill what He has created. Ignorance is not an excuse. God gave all humans the faculty to distinguish right from wrong. Those who willingly choose evil are responsible for their deeds.

The Quest for Immortality

It is my belief (belief means something for which one has no evidence) that we humans are the only species that is aware of its mortality. I recall the day I became aware of human mortality. It was a traumatic experience. I was about eight or nine years old when an elderly lady who was our acquaintance was hit by a truck and died. I was shocked by the realization that she was gone for ever. I kept asking "why". My mother reassured me that she had gone to a better place. I accepted her explanation because it made me feel better and I wanted to believe.

Because we humans are aware of our mortality, we seek immortality. We want to beat the death. How we do that depends very much on our maturity and our ability to think rationally.

Primitive humans solved this problem by promoting the belief that they will transcend death by either resurrecting, reincarnating or by acquiring an ethereal incorruptible body in a new (spiritual) dimension. Rational people find it hard to accept these assumptions. They satisfy their quest for immortality by trying to leave a trace of themselves behind. This sentiment was beautifully expressed by Orianna Fallachi, who in her last days, while cancer was fast depleting her vital energy, ran against the time to write three books, warning the West of the looming danger of Islamization of Europe. She said, “Through these books I will die a little less.”

This is what derives people who do not believe in an afterlife. They seek their immortality through their legacy. Painters, poets, writers, teachers, philosophers and inventors strive to die a little less through their work.

One does not have to be necessarily a painter or a writer to become immortal. We can outlive our death and acquire immortality through our deeds. Our deeds have a ripple effect and their echo lasts for decades, centuries or even millennia. Abused people abuse others! This abuse passes from one generation to another. All tyrants of history who butchered thousands or millions of people had abusive childhood. Hitler, Stalin, Saddam. Pol Pot, Genghis Khan, Mao, apart from their savagery and ruthlessness had one more thing in common. They were all survivors of abusive childhood. Those who abused them sow evil in them and this evil came into fruition when these children became adults. Acts of kindness also pass from one generation to another and last. Therefore, we are all immortal. We all live through our deeds. They are the seeds that we sow.

I don’t know what will happen to us after we die. No one has come back to tell us. My guess is that we cease to exist. We will return to nothingness just as we were before we came to this world. However, like everyone else, I too seek immortality. I do not trust the vacuous promise of an orgiastic paradise filled with debauchery and carnal delights. If these things are immoral here, they should be immoral also in the other world. I do not find them pleasurable anyway. I think the greatest pleasure is learning and in giving. I seek my immortality through my deeds. I strive to leave a trace of myself in this world – the best part of me- and sow good seeds. I do my best to ease people’s pains, to bring joy where there is sorrow; to shed light where there is darkness, to impart knowledge where there is ignorance and to spread understanding where there is confusion. I have chosen my goal and have determined my purpose of life. I want to be an instrument of peace and work towards the unity of mankind. I will not be fooled by spurious promises of a sensual afterlife, but will cling to what is real and concrete. Goodness is real and I strive to be good and do good.

Our goodness will outlive us. Of that we can be certain. Can anyone be certain of anything else that may outlive us? The belief in the survival of the spirit is only a belief. There is no evidence to support it.

I do believe in paradise. Paradise is right here in this world. Where there is love and there is hope, that place is paradise. Why not fill this world with love and hope and transform it into a paradise?

I heard the news about the passenger jet ramming into the WTC twin towers on radio while driving. I ran into a coffee shop to watch the news. The shop was packed. People were standing watching what was happening, in disbelief. I stood there numbed, knowing who was behind that dastardly crime. When the first tower collapsed, I collapsed too. My knees were not strong enough to take that much pain that I felt in my soul. If the death of 3,000 people can bring me to my knees, how can I enjoy paradise, eat, drink and have sex merrily, when I know most of my fellow beings are tortured and burned in the most sadistic way? If this is paradise I want no part of it. If buffaloes can have empathy for their kind, are we humans less than buffalo to not feel the pain of ours?

> You say, “(Please, quote some authentic sources with references, NOT YOUR PERSONAL BELIEFS. Do refrain from quoting Muslim sources on this.)

Why should I quote someone else when I am endowed with a mind of my own and can use it? Are we sheep to follow someone else? Why can’t YOU use your own brain and say something of your own and not quote a dead Arab of the seventh century? I give you my opinion. If you seek the opinion of others, ask THEM.

> I repeat again, I'll debate you, at least once, on Islam but after a break.
>
> Thank you again for clarifying the answer to my previous offer on public debate.
>
> (P.S.: I'll not answer anything you write to me other than about the query above.)

Who said I seek debate with you or with anyone? I have written millions of words explaining my thoughts and have made them available on this site for free. You are most welcome to read them, pick what you want and leave what you don’t. If I debate it is to make everyone realize Islam is a lie. I want Muslims leave Islam because I care about them and I care about this world and everyone living in it.

> Can you kindly show me a link on your website, for verification, where you've proclaimed to every reader that comes to your site that you'll present yourself to die if any Muslim can successfully refute ANY ONE of your arguments against Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)?
>
> Thank U & Allah Hafiz,
>
> Yours truly,
> Dr. Sohail

I did not say this before but I say it now. If you or anyone can disprove my charges against your psychopath prophet, I will come to any event that you Muslims may organize, knowing fully well that what you actually have prepared for me is not a public debate but my assassination.

I say this, not because I have any desires to die. On the contrary I love life and want to live it to the max. It is only by living that I can leave a trace of myself and “die a little less.” I say this because I am certain that no one can refute any of my charges against Muhammad. I bet with my life.

I sincerely hope that you too realize that Islam is evil, and a lie, that you leave this doctrine of hate and join us. We are all one people. Do not let the big lies of psychopaths such as Hitler and Muhammad separate us and make us kill one another. Leave Islam and embrace all humankind. You have a big family, do not make yourself a stranger. Do not harbor the hatred of your brothers and sisters. Do not sharpen your knife to shed the blood of another human. By killing someone, you are killing yourself. It is your humanity that you are killing.